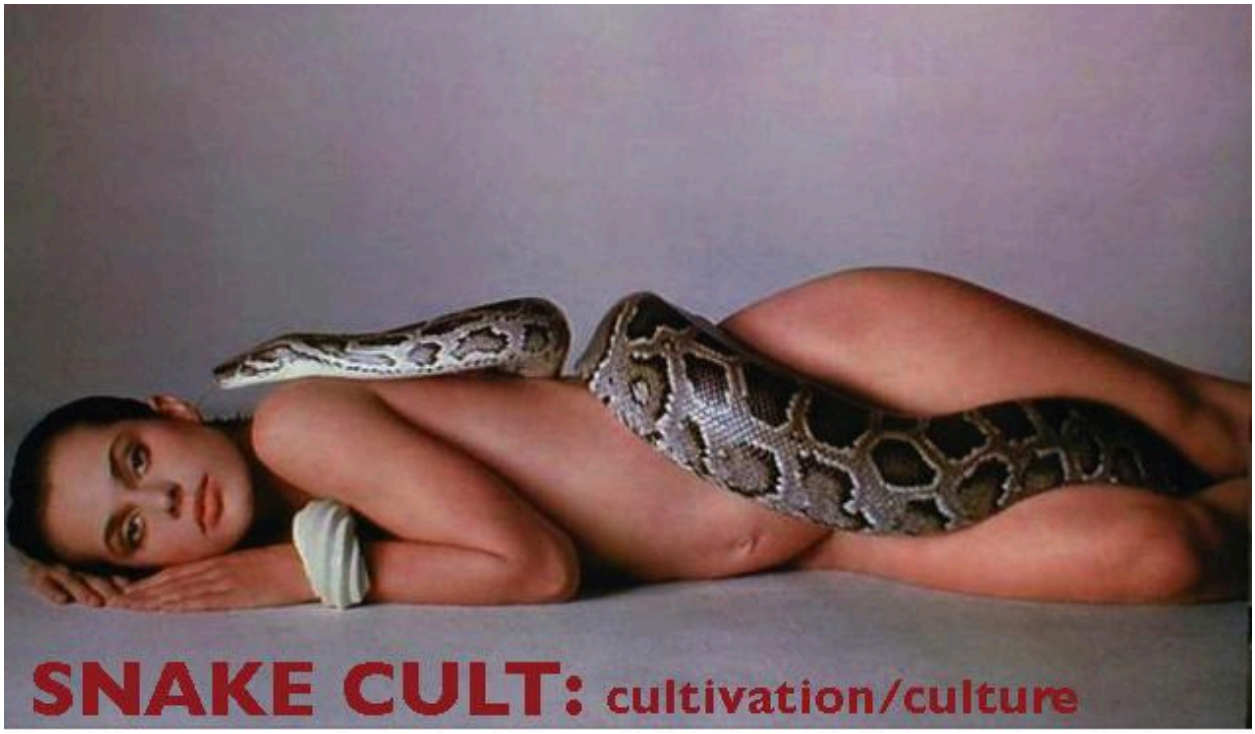
Snake Cultivation (2011)



Margit Galanter

November 21, 2011

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An ongoing movement laboratory based on Steve Paxton’s Material for the Spine, with supportive experiments from Feldenkrais, qigong, and dance (2011)

The spine is a physical and imaginal resource for clarity in dancing and depth of power. In this ongoing experiment, we will investigate the architecture and function of the central axis, as well as the quality of movement that comes from intimacy with our spine over time. The foundational tools for this study will be Steve Paxton’s Material for the Spine, along with qigong, the Feldenkrais Method , and improvisational forms.

The goal of the Cult is collective and creative study that enriches our respective practices and brings new and brilliant movement into the dance habitat.

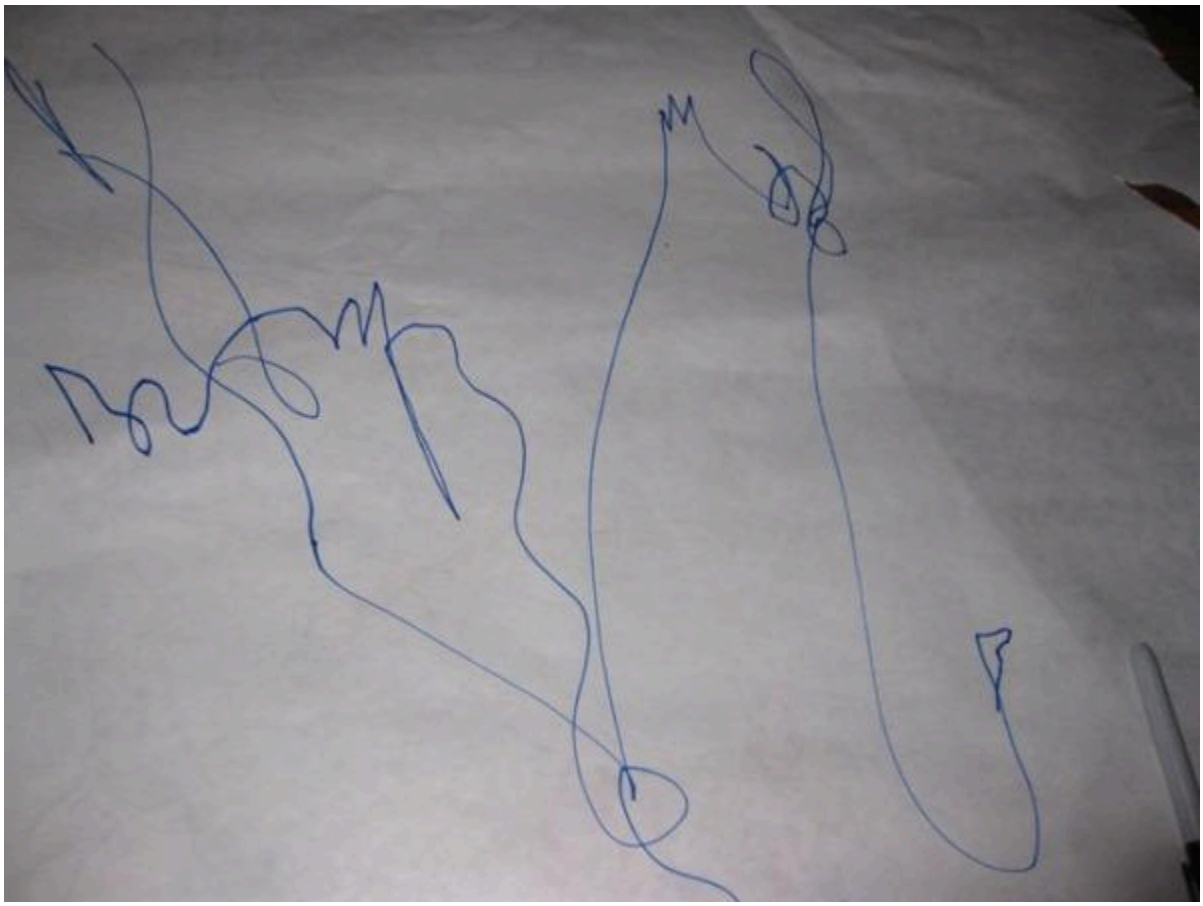
Ischial Drawing

November 21, 2011

Yesterday in Snake Cultivation we spent some time practicing the curving and bowing of our bones from the blade of the hand and extension of the fingers through the diagonal sitz bone. We worked with several lines and connections, and this was one of them. Some lines as imagined to create clarity, others what we found, and others still emerged through the linkage of bone to bone to bone…. There is something about the power that emerges from the drawing and pushing through of this particular tuberosity that can do so much in one's dancing – direction, clarity, power, flow. I woke up this morning and did a sitting bone drawing: reaching from the hand, pushing and pulling

from the bone and the multiple angles of the bone as it connects through the spinal linkage -> through shoulder -> arm -> eventually the marker. Steve Paxton helped clarify in connecting through the pinky and ring finger as a differentiated action from folding from the other three.

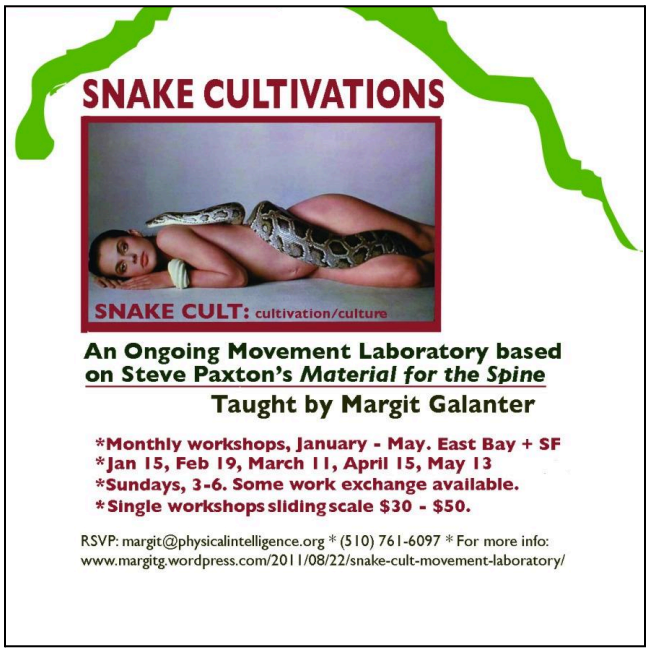
Here is one image:



Years ago in training with Dennis Leri: he spoke of the cyberneticist who came to the San Francisco ’75 Feldenkrais Training and discussed the ease of writing to be transferred to other parts of the self, that we can write not just with our hands, but that our movement patterning generalizes to places as distal as the top of one’s head, which expressed the holography of human action and neural pathways (is this Karl Pribham?). Since then it incited in me so much experimentation and play with writing through the whole body. And here and now, the sitz bones. Maybe the picture per se is no masterpiece, yet in the practice of making it, some clarity emerged as mediated through both the action of drawing, the clarity of the pathway, and the motor and initiation of the thing. This idea definitely was one of the seeds that incited my research into inscriptions and embodied writing.

The materiality of the bones. The Material for the Spine. Kinematic linkages from vertebra to vertebra to vertebra… The structural intentionality of the livingness of bone. The spongeyness of bones. The spaciousness and spirallic nature of bones. Their bendability.

Rich source for creative research. Bone nerd this morning, for sure.



self-made flyer, 2011

Aspirational, image by Mike Ruiz